

Lead Poisoning and Nutrition

Protect your child from lead poisoning. Give your child a balanced diet. By eating healthy, it can protect your child's body from lead. To promote smart eating habits, be sure to:

- Give children under age two breast milk or iron-fortified formula.
- Provide your toddler or older child with small meals 4 to 6 times a day. Your child will absorb less lead if their stomach is full.
- Make sure they are eating foods high in Calcium, Iron, and Vitamin C. They help lower lead absorption.
 - Calcium: milk, yogurt, cheese, green leafy vegetables (spinach, collard greens)
 - Iron: lean meats (beef, chicken, pork); fish, cereals, dried fruits (raisins, prunes)
 - Vitamin C: oranges, grapefruit, green peppers, tomatoes, fruit juices
- Reduce fats. Foods high in fat are donuts, bacon, fast foods, and potato chips.

Ideas for meals and snacks include:

Breakfast

French toast
Orange
Low-fat milk

Lunch

Grilled cheese w/tomato
Coleslaw
Low-fat milk

Dinner

Sloppy Joes
Watermelon slice
Low-fat milk

Oatmeal
Sliced banana
Orange juice

Tuna sandwich
Pear slices
100% fruit juice

Macaroni and cheese
Sliced tomatoes or beans
Apple

Snacks may include a small pack of raisins, peanut butter on celery sticks, whole wheat crackers with cheese, yogurt, cucumber slices, or any fruit in season.

The only way to know if your child has lead poisoning is to have them tested even if they seem healthy. Lead is a poison. It occurs without any symptoms and can harm your child's body. It can cause learning, hearing and behavioral problems.

- **When to test:** Ask your child's doctor or other healthcare provider to test your child between ages 6 and 12 months and again at 24 months. After age two, test yearly until your child turns 6 years old.
- **How it is done:** A blood test is taken with just a small finger/heel stick. New lab test kits are available at most health departments and doctor offices, so you do not have to make an extra trip to the lab. Ask your doctor about these tests today.